

SECOND SECTION (B) - AMENDMENT TO THE CLAIMS

Claims 1-8, 18 (canceled)

NE [Claim 5 (currently amended) apparatus according to claim [4] 20
wherein,

each panel includes signal lights corresponding with the push
buttons for visually indicating the presence of articles [on] in, and
absence of articles from, the corresponding [shelf] bin.]

Q1 Claim 9 (currently amended) apparatus according to claim [8] 21
and including a plurality of supply carts of identical construction,
the computer is capable of receiving signals from each of the
supply carts and functioning in relation to all of the supply carts, [as set
out in claim 8.]

Claim 10 (re-presented) Apparatus according to claim 9 wherein,
the apparatus includes a system computer, and a server computer,
and
the cart computer is capable of transmitting signals to the server
computer.

Claim 11 (re-presented) Apparatus according to claim 10 and
including a printer, and the server computer is operable for transmitting
signals to the recording means.

Claim 12 (currently amended) apparatus according to claim [6] 21
wherein, the capacity of the supply bins [may be] is less than that of the
storage bins.

the computer means is operable for sensing the number of
articles in the supply bins [and in the storage bin] and, in response to
the number in the supply bins being less than [that] a predetermined
safety level in the storage bins, being capable of setting up a control
signal,

[the apparatus also includes a recording means]

the computer means being capable of transmitting said control
signal to the printer, and the printer, in response to receiving such
control signal, being capable of printing a pick list containing the
difference between the number of articles in the supply cart and [the
number in the storage cart] a predetermined maximum level in the
storage bins.

Claim 14 (currently amended) A method according to claim 13, [an]
and including the steps, maintaining the supply cart in open condition
indefinitely, withdrawing articles continuously throughout a
predetermined overall period, independently of operation of other steps,
and restocking articles from the storage cart through the supply cart,
independently of operation of other steps.

Q3
Claim 17 (currently amended) Apparatus according to claim [7] 21
and including means for providing alert signal in response to hazardous
materials in the articles.

Q4
Claim 19 (currently amended) Apparatus according to claim [7] 21
and including,
signal means in each [bin] of the supply carts activatable by the
[user] operator to identify the [receiver] user of the articles withdrawn.

Q5
Claim 20 (new) Apparatus for use in distributing a plurality of
articles of different kinds throughout a facility that has a central storage
area, and a plurality of user areas distributed in the facility at substantial
distances from the storage area, comprising,

a storage cart in the storage area having a plurality of storage bins
for holding a corresponding number of said articles of different kinds,

the storage cart having labels individually identifying said articles
in the storage bins,

an open supply cart having a plurality of shelves and bins on the
shelves adjacent to each of the user areas,

a control panel corresponding to each of the shelves in each
supply cart, and being separate in construction from the shelf and
thereby being detachably mountable thereon,

the control panels being capable of being put in operable position
independently of other elements on the shelves,

the control panels having manually actuatable control buttons respectively corresponding to and identifying said articles, and being closely adjacent the articles when the control panels are in operative position.

the panels being so positioned, when in operative position, as to enable a user to actuate a control button in the same movement of the hand used in placing said articles in the supply cart and removing them therefrom.

Claim 21 (new) Apparatus according to claim 20, and including a computer operably associated with each supply cart, and operable in response to actuation of the push buttons in the respective panel for recording the number of articles in the respective bins, and recording the withdrawing the articles from the respective bins.

Claim 22 (new) Apparatus for use in distributing a plurality of articles of different kinds throughout a facility that has a central storage area, and a plurality of user areas distributed in the facility at substantial distances from the storage area, comprising

a storage cart in the storage area having a plurality of storage bins for holding a corresponding number of said articles of different kinds,

the storage cart having labels individually identifying articles in the storage bins,

an open supply cart adjacent to each of the user areas and having supply bins for receiving and holding said articles, and the supply cart having labels individually identifying articles in the supply bins,

supplemental panels having push buttons operably associated with the storage bins, and the apparatus including a computer for registering signals from the push buttons.

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Claim 23 (new) Apparatus according to claim 21 wherein, the capacity of the supply bins is less than that of the storage bins,

the computer means is operable for sensing the number of articles in the supply bins [and in the storage bins] and, in response to the number in the supply bins being less than [that] a predetermined safety level in the storage bins, being capable of setting up a control signal,

the computer means being capable of transmitting said control signal to the printer, and the printer, in response to receiving said control signal, being capable of printing a pick list containing the difference between the number of articles in the supply cart and [the number in the storage cart] a predetermined maximum level in the storage bins.

Claim 24 (new) Apparatus for use in distributing a plurality of articles of different kinds throughout a facility that has a central storage area and a plurality of user areas distributed in the facility at substantial distances from the storage area, comprising

a storage cart in the storage area having a plurality of storage bins for holding a corresponding number of said articles of different kinds,

the storage cart having labels individually identifying articles in the storage bins

the storage cart having recording means for recording the identity of each of said articles, and also including a main set of panels and push buttons thereon corresponding to the articles respectively, and further including means for recording the identity of the articles in response to manual actuation of the push buttons,

the storage cart being a self-contained, operable unit,

the apparatus including a supply cart adjacent to each of the user areas,

a second set of panels corresponding to the panels of the main set,

the panels of the second set having push buttons corresponding to the push buttons of the main set, and

the apparatus including means for transmitting signals to the recording means in response to actuation of the push buttons of the second set.

Claim 25 (new) Apparatus according to claim 24 wherein,

the panels of the second set are mounted on the user carts in operable relation to the panels of the main set respectively.

Claim 26 (new) Apparatus according to claim 25 wherein,
the panels of the second set are mountable on the supply cart in operable position wherein they mechanically inhibit the actuation of the push buttons of the main set.

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Claim 27 (new) Apparatus for use in distributing a plurality of articles of different kinds throughout a facility that has a central storage area, and a plurality of user areas distributed in the facility at substantial distances from the storage area, comprising,

a storage cart in the storage area having a plurality of storage bins for holding a corresponding number of said articles of different kinds,

the storage cart having labels individually identifying articles in the storage bins,

an open supply cart adjacent to each of the user areas and having supply bins for receiving and holding said articles, and the supply cart having labels individually identifying articles in the supply bins,

the storage cart and the supply carts having open fronts enabling the user to insert his hand into the storage bin and the supply bins,

the storage cart having push buttons corresponding to the articles in the storage cart respectively,

the supply cart having push buttons corresponding to articles in the storage bins respectively, and

means independent of the storage cart and the supply carts and

movable selectively into operable relation to the push buttons on the storage cart or the push buttons on the supply carts respectively.

Claim 28 (new) Apparatus according to Claim 21 wherein, the computer includes a bar code reader unit.

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Claim 29 (new) Apparatus according to claim 21 wherein, the computer includes a radio-frequency (RF) identification reader.

Claim 30 (new) Apparatus according to claim 21 wherein, the computer includes an infrared (IF) reader.

Claim 31 (new) Apparatus according to claim 21 wherein, the computer includes an auxiliary keyboard.

Claim 32 (new) A method according to claim 13, and including the steps, utilizing a bar code reader as an auxiliary means of registering articles placed in and withdrawn from the bins.

Claim 33 (new) A method according to claim 13, and including the steps, utilizing a radio-frequency (RF) identification reader as an auxiliary means of requesting articles placed in and withdrawn from the bins.

Claim 34 (new) A method according to claim 13, and including the steps, utilizing an infrared (IR) reader as an auxiliary means of registering articles placed in and withdrawn from the bins.

Claim 35 (new) A method according to claim 13, and including the steps, utilizing an auxiliary keypad as an auxiliary means of registering articles placed in and withdrawn from the bins.

Claim 36 (new) A method according to claim 35, and including the steps, utilizing a bar code reader as an auxiliary means to identify the users of the articles withdrawn

Claim 37 (new) A method according to claim 35, and including the steps, utilizing a radio-frequency (RF) identification reader as an auxiliary means to identify the users of the articles withdrawn.

Claim 38 (new) A method according to claim 35, and including the steps, utilizing an infrared (IR) reader as an auxiliary means to identify the users of the articles withdrawn.

Claim 39 (new) A method according to claim 35, and including the steps, utilizing an auxiliary keypad as an auxiliary means to identify the users of the articles withdrawn.

Claim 40 (new) A method according to claim 13, and including the steps, submitting a charge event to a billing system when a user is identified and an article is withdrawn from a bin.

Claim 41 (new) A method according to claim 13, and including the steps, submitting an assignment event to a manufacturing management system when a user is identified and an article is withdrawn from a bin.

End of Second Section
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THIRD SECTION (C) -

AMENDMENT TO THE SPECIFICATION

(none)

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